

## REMARKS

### *Status of the Claims*

Claims 1-13 and 22 are pending with Claims 1 and 22 being independent. Claims 14-21 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

### *Requested Action*

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

### *Allowable Subject Matter*

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 1-13 and 22.

### *Claim Rejections*

Claims 14-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,216,952 (Mou) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,844,730 (Aikawa). In response, while not conceding the propriety of the rejection, Claims 14-21 have been canceled without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejection moot.

Applicants submit that this Amendment After Final Rejection clearly places the subject application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not presented earlier, because Applicants believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the instant Amendment, as an earnest

attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

*Conclusion*

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Any fee required in connection with this paper should be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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